CALGARY metro®

NEWS WORTH SHARING.

Magnotta jury to begin deliberations

Judge advises jury to first tackle whether Magnotta was criminally responsible PAGE 10

U of C prepares as oil prices tank

Institution setting up budget cut scenarios as the provincial financial picture worsens PAGE 4

NEW GENERATION REDEFINING FEMINISM

HIGH-PROFILE FEMINISTS SUCH AS MALALA YOUSAFZAI ARE FIGHTING FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS BEFORE THEY'VE BECOME WOMEN THEMSELVES PAGE 14

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Wildrose to talk Tory merger, sources say

Beginning of the end?
Party has seen hard times recently, losing four byelections to Jim Prentice's PCs

Sources have told The Canadian Press that Alberta's opposition Wildrose caucus is expected to meet Tuesday to discuss merging with Premier Jim Prentice's Progressive Conservatives.

One source says if merger talks fail, there may be four or more defections to the Tory team. The sources spoke on condition of anonymity.

Wildrose Leader Danielle Smith and house leader Rob Anderson could not be reached for comment late Monday.

Earlier Monday, Prentice was asked by reporters if he knew of any impending Wildrose floor crossings. He said there are "always discussions amongst people" that he is not a part of.

The Wildrose saw two MLAs quit to join Prentice three weeks ago.

Kerry Towle, the MLA for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake, and Ian Donovan, the member for Little Bow, said they had grown disillusioned with the Wildrose and liked the direction of the province under Prentice.

Another Wildrose member, Joe Anglin, quit in early November ahead of a caucus vote to oust him for, among other things, secretly taping caucus meetings. Anglin has denied this and Smith has never provided evidence.

The three departures left the Wildrose with 14 members compared with 63 for the Tories. Shayne Saskiw, MLA for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills, was widely speculated as one of the crossing MLAs, but he issued a statement on Facebook, denying the claims.

"I am committed to fighting for the constituents of Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills and to advocate for our priorities and for the needs of our communities. There is a rumour that I will be crossing the floor tomorrow. That rumour is false," the statement reads.

The party is rural-based, particularly in the south, with just two MLAs in Calgary and none in Edmonton.

Wildrose woes

Last month, the party was sharply criticized for refusing to adopt into policy a resolution it passed last year to pledge its support for equal rights for all minority groups, including gays.

- The policy refusal reignited accusations from the 2012 election campaign that the party was intolerant and anti-gay.

A merger could mean the beginning of the end for the Wildrose, a right-centre party that gained strength and popularity against the centrist former Tory premier Alison Redford but has been struggling to find its identity against the like-minded Prentice.

The Wildrose has met hard times after it lost four byelections to Prentice on Oct. 27.

The party has been dropping in popular opinion polls and Smith has criticized the mainstream media for fostering a narrative of the Wildrose as an angry and divisive party.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

It's widely speculated that Wildrose leader Danielle Smith, seen here in an undated file photo, could be meeting with her caucus today to discuss a merger the Alberta's Progressive Conservative Party.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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NEWS 1

Council calls for four more reports on secondary suites

... after 33 reports since 2005. Council rejects reform plan, calls for new study on old idea of legalizing suites in inner-city wards

ROBSON FLETCHER
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In a process that one member likened to "giving birth to a chair," city council dissected Calgary's existing policy on secondary suites Monday and then ground to a halt while trying to come up with a new system to regulate how people install separate entrances and second kitchens in their homes.

A highly anticipated item on the always controversial topic — marking the 33rd report on secondary suites to come to council since 2005 — was moved to the top of the agenda Monday morning but then subsequently bumped to the end of the agenda after hours of debate led nowhere.

At one point, Mayor Naheed Nenshi, exasperated, said he would be "done" dealing with the issue if council didn't come to some form of decision and suggested he might effectively boycott future public hearings on secondary suites by leaving the room while they take place, if the status quo is maintained.

Currently, city council must individually approve changes to land-use zoning for people who want to build secondary suites but live in one of Calgary's many residential areas that prohibit such dwellings.

In their report, city staff recommended making secondary suites a "discretionary use" in those areas, subject to an approval process that would be handled administratively, rather than by council.

The details of that process would still have to be worked out but chief licensing inspector Marc Halat said it would likely be similar to the licensing process for home-based businesses — subject to appeals, renewals, and attached to the person, not the property.

Cliff De Jong of the city's planning department said the process would aim to ensure neighbours are consulted and safety standards are met before any suite is approved.

On a motion from Coun. Peter Demong, council then voted 12-3 to include licence requirements for all such dwellings across the entire city, even areas where secondary suites are currently allowed.

Coun. Evan Woolley, who voted against the change, said if Calgary were to take that step — ostensibly aimed at "solving the problem" of "bad landlords" — the next logical step would be to require licences for all rental accommodations.

"There are bad landlords that rent whole houses and rent apartments across the city," he said.

Coun. Druh Farrell described the licences-for-all-suites requirement as "creating red tape" but supported it anyway, hoping for some compromise on the issue she has long championed.

Then Demong proposed a second amendment that would have watered down the reforms, one which Farrell said she couldn't support, adding that she had just about enough of the entire debate.

"It's like giving birth to a chair," she said of the whole process.

At that point, Nenshi called a time-out on the whole process, and asked that the report be put off until later in the day, to give councillors time to "breathe."

Council agreed, and when debate resumed Monday evening, Demong withdrew his amendment.

Council ultimately rejected the reform plan, by an 8-7 vote.

Farrell then put forward a modified version of her proposal from last spring to look at legalizing suites in four inner-city wards and within a certain radius of major transit.

Council approved, calling for even more reports on each idea, in addition to reports on a licensing system for secondary suites and the feasibility of attaching a plebiscite on the issue to the Calgary Board of Education byelection set for April 2015.

Mayor Naheed Nenshi said Monday he's getting so tired of public hearings on secondary suites — which he believes are unnecessary and often embarrassing for those involved — that he may just leave the room the next time one comes to council, if the policy doesn't change. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO FILE

Round and round

"Yes, we've got another report. Yay!"

Coun. Diane Colley-Urquhart, tongue planted in cheek, at the conclusion of a chippy council debate Monday that spanned 12 hours.

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University preps budget-cut scenarios as province's financial picture worsens

Tough budget on horizon? Institution's ambitious strategy challenged by funding troubles

JEREMY NOLAIS
jeremy.nolais@metronews.ca

University of Calgary students are seen in Mac Hall. The community is bracing for the worst, but hoping for the best as Alberta's financial picture darkens. METRO FILE

Planners at Calgary's largest post-secondary institution are preparing scenarios that would see up to five per cent of their provincial funding cut in 2015, but the school's second-in-command said she hopes it doesn't come to that.

Dru Marshall, provost at the University of Calgary, said the warnings are apparent in the headlines she reads and the routine conversations she has with Alberta's advanced education ministry.

At the very least, there are months to prepare, unlike 2013, when post-secondary leaders were largely caught off-guard by a 7.3 per cent cut when they'd expected a two per cent boost.

"I have a feeling this time is going to be more difficult than the last time, in part because we took the last hit, but in part because every day the news seems to get worse around oil and gas prices and we know those have a significant impact on the provincial budget," Marshall told Metro in an interview.

The other scenarios being plotted anticipate a three per cent reduction in funding, a two per cent increase and a flat-line budget, which had seemed the likely outcome before oil prices plummeted below $70 U.S. per barrel and have since continued to drop.

The university's $572-million Campus Alberta grant this year is still 3.3 per cent below the $592 million it received for 2012-13.

"We're worried that it's going to happen again," said Levi Nilson, vice-president external with the Students' Union, alluding to the 2013 cuts. "We're hoping it's not as bad as last time, but any kind of cut we see is compounded by what happened in 2013. It sucks and we're all worried about and preparing for it."

Figures released at a town hall earlier this year indicate faculty budgets already have little wiggle room — five deans are spending 95 per cent or more of their available salary allotment this year.

Marshall said internal discussions are being held to look at streamlining campus operations, generating additional revenue and she hinted at major efforts to somewhat wean the university of its dependence on provincial funding, which currently makes up about half of its budget.

"We're still hoping that the value of post-secondary is recognized as something (that), in creating a knowledge economy, would actually help diversify the economy in Alberta," she said, later adding: "The question we've got to ask is this a permanent position or is there a chance to bridge to a different kind of strategy?" she said.

Faring well in comparison

Compared to some other institutions, the University of Calgary actually fared pretty well in closing the gap created by 2013's surprise cut to post-secondary funding.

- The school did cut 19 programs that had seen low enrolment, eliminated 50 staff positions through attrition, and cut enrolment by 245 seats in arts, medicine and nursing.

U of C approves tuition hike, tiered residence fees

Levi Nilson with the U of C Students' Union METRO FILE

University of Calgary students will fork out a bit more for tuition in 2015-16 and those living on campus have the option of paying extra for a better view.

The institution's board of governors has approved a 2.2 per cent tuition hike, the maximum allowed due to legislation tying such increases to the rate of inflation, and also approved an introduction of tiered residence pricing.

The latter move is a controversial one, with student representatives fearing it will lead to "social stratification," with poorer students living on the lower floors and those with more money to spare taking the premium upper-level suites.

"The way that it works now is everybody just gets kind of thrown into the mix and it's a great culture, basically, in residence right now," said Levi Nilson with the campus Students' Union.

As an example, a studio apartment in the upper three floors of Cascade Hall will run a student $8,280 for eight months, compared to the $7,452 shelled out by their peers below.

Overall residence rates will also rise in Yamnuska Hall, Kananaskis and Rundle Hall as well as for certain room types in Cascade and Aurora Hall by anywhere from one to five per cent.

Townhomes available for rent on campus will see their rates rise five per cent as well.

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

By the numbers

$538

Canadian-born U of C students currently pay $538.59 in tuition per course, with the exception of those learning through the Haskayne School of Business, where an additional $238.83 fee is tacked on.

52% support

Majority of Catholic Albertans support GSAs, new survey reveals

New data shows 52 per cent of Albertans who identify as Catholics support gay-straight alliances (GSAs) in the province's schools.

The survey, conducted by Canadian market research firm Leger, polled 1,002 Albertans asking if respondents supported or opposed the ideas of schools allowing GSAs in Alberta.

Approximately 18 per cent of Catholic respondents said they oppose GSAs in school, with 11.6 per cent indicating that they strongly opposed the idea, and 6.2 per cent saying they somewhat opposed it.

Respondents who neither support nor oppose the clubs total 19.7 per cent, and 10.1 per cent had no opinion on the issue.

Earlier this month, the province announced it would be putting a pause on Bill 10, a new piece of legislation that would give the province's school boards the final say on GSAs in schools, while offering students legal recourse to fight the decision.

Dr. Kris Wells, director of programs and services with the Institute for Sexual Minorities Studies and Services at the University of Alberta, said this new data shows the need for the clubs in schools.

"When only 18 per cent of Catholics are opposed to gay-straight alliances, this is an indication of how far Albertans have moved on the LGBTQ issues and a stunning reflection on how far Alberta's elected officials have fallen behind their constituents," he said.

There are more than 90 GSAs in the province's public schools, while the province's Catholic school board authority said they support inclusive clubs that welcome all students rather than GSAs.

In a letter obtained by Metro, Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association president Tony Sykora wrote to the province that Catholic boards do not support singling out one group of students at the expense of other vulnerable groups.

"Let's be clear, Alberta Catholic schools provide inclusive, welcoming, safe and respectful learning environments for all students regardless of ethnic or religious backgrounds, abilities, social status or sexual orientation," Sykora wrote.

LEAH HOLOIDAY/METRO IN EDMONTON

Students granted free library access

Noor Farhan, left, and Noor Ali check out some books at the Crowfoot Library. HELEN PIKE/METRO

Youth outreach. Library aiming to eliminate all membership fees

Calgary students can now check out books and other resources with ease after an announcement placing library cards in the hands of kids for free.

In partnership with the public and Catholic school boards, the Calgary Public Library is hoping to draw more kids in with an array of digital and physical resources. The program, called Library Unlimited, will put roughly 165,000 cards in the hands of students and teachers.

"This has kind of weighed on me as a mom and as somebody who thinks one of the best places you can go is the library," said Janet Hutchinson, Calgary Public Library board chair. "I'm really thrilled that there are no more fees and I've marched my children ... over to the library to get new cards."

The move is a step toward the library's goal of removing all membership fees in the new year. It's hoping to attract not only students but families and to bring up the number of Calgarians using library resources.

"We want nothing to stand in the way of anybody being able to use the library," said Bill Ptacek, chief executive officer of the Calgary Public Library. "The library needs to be relevant to everybody in the community, and we can't do that if we just have the students in the library."

Students will have special card designs based on their grade. Money for the program is coming out of the library operating budget.

HELEN PIKE/METRO

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Two suspects charged in man's 2006 killing

Calgary RCMP have charged two men in connection with a 2006 homicide.

The body of Wayman Cornell Scott, 32, was found dumped along a rural road near Conrich, east of Calgary, on Dec. 11, 2006.

Investigators have since determined that he was shot in a Calgary home and then his body was transported to the spot where it was discovered.

David Daviau, 28, faces a charge of first-degree murder, and Kyle Andree, 28, has been charged with manslaughter and accessory after the fact.

Both men were arrested in Ontario and are due to appear in court Wednesday.

METRO

Homicide victim Wayman Cornell Scott COURTESY RCMP

Southeast Calgary

Man dies of stab wounds

Homicide detectives are investigating a suspicious death in southeast Calgary, where a man was found Monday morning suffering from stab wounds.

Police were called to the 5300 block of 5th Avenue S.E. and found a man believed to be in his 30s.

The man died later in hospital. METRO

Crime. Parents in court over malnutrition claims

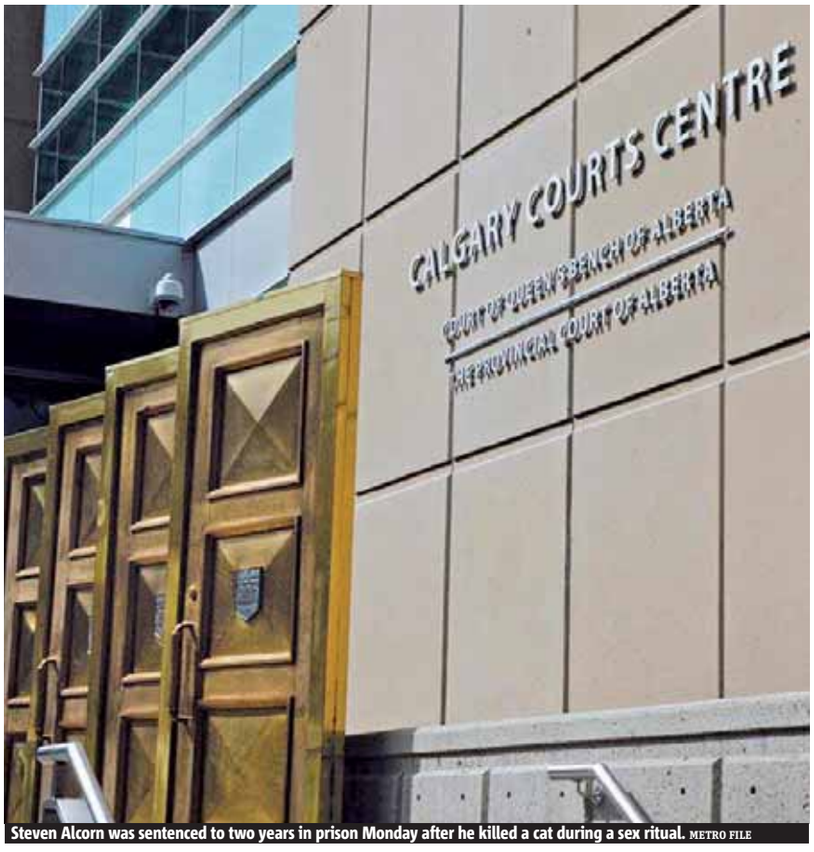
A Calgary couple who are accused of contributing to their toddler's death by not providing enough nutrition have appeared briefly in court.

Jennifer Clark, 38, and Jeromie Clark, 34, were charged with criminal negligence causing death and failure to provide the necessities of life after their 14-month-old son, John, died in hospital in November 2013.

Staff Sgt. Doug Andrus told a news conference on Saturday the child was suffering from a staph infection that was complicated by malnutrition, and as a result the infection was untreatable.

Andrus also said the family followed strict dietary restrictions based on their faith and nutritional beliefs but he refused to elaborate.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Steven Alcorn was sentenced to two years in prison Monday after he killed a cat during a sex ritual. METRO FILE

Cat killer given two-year sentence

'It shouldn't (have) happened in the first place.' Steven Alcorn says he's remorseful, has always regretted horrific crime

JEREMY NOLAIS
jeremy.nolais@metronews.ca

WARNING: Story contains graphic and explicit details.

Guilty of slitting a cat's throat during a horrifying sex ritual, a judge has ordered a Calgary man to spend two years behind bars.

The gruesome incident occurred in September 2012, a few days after Steven Alcorn and his then-girlfriend purchased the cat off Kijiji. Court has heard the animal was strung up by its hind legs to a rafter in a garage. Alcorn's girlfriend then got down on her hands and knees while he cut the cat and let its blood rain down on her.

During psychiatric evaluations, it was said that Alcorn often questioned whether he had done anything wrong.

"Certainly I would think he thinks differently now — I'd hope so — but certainly that's an indication of the warped sense of this individual's thinking," Crown prosecutor Gordon Haight told reporters after sentencing Monday.

Metro did reach Alcorn earlier in the day prior to sentencing. He claimed he'd always been remorseful and said, "I look forward to proving to the courts that it was out of my nature and that I want to move past this and on with my life."

Alcorn also claimed that the decision to kill the cat stemmed from the "heavy influence" of his girlfriend at the time and that he was drunk when the ritual occurred.

"I went through a bad depression afterwards. It shouldn't (have) happened in the first place. Honestly, I was very pressed into doing it.... I truly believe that my ex should be taking responsibility for the major role she played in this as well.

"She had a lot of responsibility and influence in what happened, and everyone seems to overlook and blame me for the actions and willing participation that she had."

Haight, meanwhile, said the case was unusual as the majority of animal abuse incidents involve far less premeditation.

"This case was serious enough to warrant a very severe sentence, and the judge thought so as well," he said.

Alcorn has also been ordered to undergo treatment for substance abuse and domestic violence issues.

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Economy. Alberta imposes cost-saving measures in face of falling energy revenues

Alberta is imposing some cost-saving measures to help deal with sharply falling resource revenues.

Premier Jim Prentice announced Monday that government hiring will be restricted to critical or frontline positions.

There will also be spending restrictions for goods and services and on discretionary items such as travel and training.

"We do not know how long this price trough is going to continue, but it may go far longer than has been expected," Prentice said Monday as the price of a barrel of oil closed at $55.91 US.

"So our challenge is how do we weather this price trough."

Prentice said the province could see a $7-billion drop in resource revenue this year.

The cost-saving measures will also apply to Alberta Health Services, schools, universities, colleges and agencies.

Prentice has formed a special committee of cabinet ministers that he will lead to work on the government's upcoming budget. He said the group will look at economic projections, capital and operating budgets, policy commitments and revenue forecasts.

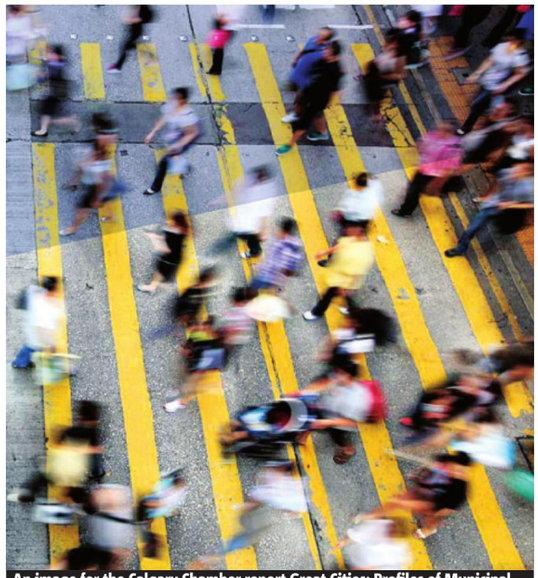
The committee will include Finance Minister Robin Campbell, Health Minister Stephen Mandel and the ministers of Municipal Affairs, Energy, Infrastructure and Jobs.

"We will keep our spending in check, ensuring that we operate with balanced budgets. We will tighten our own belts before we ask Albertans to further tighten theirs," he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Resource royalties

Prentice said last year the province received more than $9 billion in resource royalties, which accounted for 21 per cent of its budget.

Calgary employers urged to adjust hiring strategies



An image for the Calgary Chamber report Great Cities: Profiles of Municipal Excellence, which outlines how leading cities around the world have achieved success in the labour market and more. CONTRIBUTED

Labour crunch. Chamber of commerce president and mayor deliver similar message

ROBSON FLETCHER
robson.fletcher@metronews.ca

Faced with an ongoing labour crunch in many sectors, local businesses need to more effectively "tap into" underemployed groups of people, according to the president of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce.

Adam Legge said employers need to adjust their hiring strategies to "more focus on aboriginal workers, new immigrants, seniors and persons with disabilities" in the city.

"We have to find ways to adjust our employment practices to make sure we enable all people to perform at their potential," Legge said during the release of a chamber report titled Great Cities: Profiles of Municipal Excellence.

That report highlights the approaches that numerous cities around the world have taken to a variety of policies, including labour attraction and retention.

"The best cities also recognize the need to work with neighbouring municipalities to enable success throughout the region ... rather than trying to out-compete one another for labour and business," the report states.

Mayor Naheed Nenshi said he thinks "there is some great stuff" in the report and other things that he and the chamber "will be arguing about over the next several months."

But, on the labour front, he agreed with Legge's assessment.

During a chamber gathering last week, Nenshi asked the city's employers to always ask themselves one question: "How are our hiring practices in our business ensuring that we are maximizing the potential of the people that live here?"

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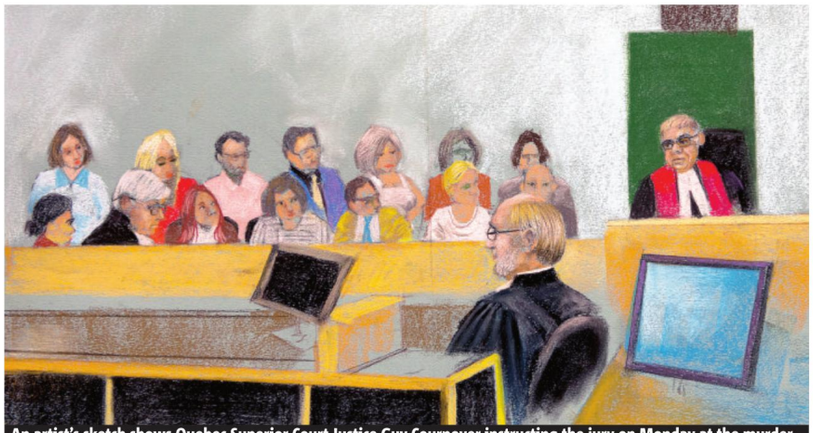
Magnotta's fate in jury's hands

Slaying of Jun Lin. A Quebec Superior Court judge has instructed the jury on what they need to consider during deliberations



An artist's sketch shows Quebec Superior Court Justice Guy Cournoyer instructing the jury on Monday at the murder trial for Luka Rocco Magnotta in Montreal. Magnotta is charged in connection with the death and dismemberment of university student Jun Lin. MIKE MCLAUGHLIN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The jurors at Luka Rocco Magnotta's first-degree murder trial were sequestered on Monday after the judge told them what they need to consider as they deliberate his fate.

Magnotta has pleaded not guilty to five charges, including first-degree murder, stemming from the May 2012 slaying and and dismemberment of Jun Lin, 33.

Quebec Superior Court Justice Guy Cournoyer's detailed final charge also opened the door to a conviction on second-degree murder or manslaughter on the murder charge.

But if the jury finds Magnotta not criminally responsible, Cournoyer said the verdict must apply to all five charges.

It's also the issue he suggested jurors tackle first when deliberations begin Tuesday.

In addition to premeditated murder, Magnotta is charged with criminally harassing Prime Minister Stephen Harper and other members of Parliament; mailing obscene and indecent material; committing an indignity to a body; and publishing obscene materials.

Psychiatrists for the defence testified throughout the trial that Magnotta is schizophrenic, was psychotic the night of the slaying and was unable to tell right from wrong.

Crown prosecutor Louis Bouthillier countered there was no mental illness at play and that the crime was planned and deliberate. He has said Magnotta should be found guilty of first-degree murder and the four other charges.

Cournoyer told the jurors they would need to answer two questions for the mental-disorder defence to be accepted. Firstly, is it more likely than not Magnotta was suffering from a mental disorder at the time of the offence? And secondly, did the disorder make him incapable of knowing the acts were wrong?

If the jury opts for a verdict of not criminally responsible, Cournoyer told them Magnotta would not be set free if he's considered a significant threat to public safety.

The jury will be required to render a unanimous verdict on each count.

Magnotta has already admitted to the physical acts of the case, meaning the jury will need to determine intent as well as the level of planning in the slaying.

Cournoyer told them they must rely solely on the evidence they have heard over 40 days since the trial began in late September. Magnotta did not testify and didn't meet with a Crown psychiatrist, but the judge said he was not obliged to do so as part of his mental-disorder defence.

Among the evidence to consider, Cournoyer said the jury will have to keep in mind that Magnotta's statements given to defence psychiatrists about facts surrounding the events in May 2012 and his own state of mind have not been independently proven. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Via Lomonosov Ridge

North Pole linked to Greenland, claims Denmark

An Arctic expert says an unspoken agreement between Arctic nations on how to divvy up northern seas is all but dead now that Denmark is presenting scientific data that it says gives it a claim to the North Pole.

The claim, which was to be filed with the United Nations on Monday, will force Canada into future negotiations on overlapping claims, said University of British Columbia international-law professor Michael Byers.

The Arctic area is believed to hold an estimated 13 per cent of the world's undiscovered oil and 30 per cent of its untapped gas.

Danish Foreign Minister Martin Lidegaard says scientific data shows Greenland is connected to the 2,000-kilometre-long Lomonosov Ridge beneath the Arctic Ocean. He says that gives Danes a claim to the North Pole and any resources on the sea floor. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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BOXING WEEK BONUS ENDS JAN 2ND

FIND NEW ROADS

Fit with prosthetics, happy dog now running

Hector, a border-collie cross who lost his back paws after they were frozen to the ground in northern Saskatchewan, is now running around on prosthetic parts. It's believed his hind feet and tail were ripped off in January 2013 when his mother picked him up off the ground. His new owner, Lisa Korol, held a fundraiser this year for Hector's $3,800 prosthetics. Korol said she hopes to get him certified as a therapy dog to help people who have lost limbs and are undergoing rehabilitation. LISA KOROL/CONTRIBUTED/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Architect wants site to honour aboriginals

First Nations. Douglas Cardinal understands need for Holocaust memorial but feels aboriginal suffering needs city's recognition

Douglas Cardinal CONTRIBUTED

LUCY SCHOLEY
Metro in Ottawa

The unceded Algonquin land slated for the National Holocaust Monument would be better suited for a memorial honouring First Nations people, according to the architect of the Canadian Museum of History.

While Douglas Cardinal said it's important to commemorate the millions who died in the Holocaust, there needs to be better recognition of the First Nations people who have suffered within their own country.

"What about the First Nations that had 95 per cent of their population wiped out?" said Cardinal. "And how about the survivors and children that had been taken away and put in residential schools, where 40 per cent died in those conditions? What we don't want is a memorial for the harm and destruction and misery caused by others. We want a place of celebration and reconciliation and forgiveness."

The National Holocaust Monument will sit at the corner of Wellington and Booth streets and face the Canadian War Museum. Like the land underneath the Supreme Court of Canada and Parliament Hill, it's considered unceded Algonquin territory. The Algonquin people and the province of Ontario have an ongoing land-claim negotiation concerning a massive swath of the eastern part of province.

Cardinal said he would envision a different memorial on that land — one that does not acknowledge the "destruction of our people" but rather celebrates their survival.

"Many people have come to this land because of the abuse that they had in their own country.... They had to leave and so they came and shared the land with us," he said. "But they forget that we're still here. We survived."

There's no significant architectural representation of First Nations people in Ottawa, he added, noting the lack of an aboriginal embassy, but the National Aboriginal Veterans Monument in Confederation Park does commemorate aboriginals who have served in the Canadian Armed Forces.

WITH FILES FROM JOE LOFARO/METRO

Toronto Ethiopians to honour ex-PM

Brian Mulroney's name could soon be associated with a bus station in a rural Ethiopian village known as "Little Canada."

A group of Ethiopian-Canadians in Toronto want to pay tribute to the former prime minister by refurbishing and naming a major bus terminal after him. They've launched a $50,000 online fundraising campaign to transform the station in Debre Tsige, a small village south of Ethiopia's capital.

When Mulroney took office in 1984, Ethiopia was in the middle of its largest famine — an event that caused hundreds of thousands of deaths. The former prime minister spearheaded efforts to contribute about 10 per cent of all international aid to Ethiopia and, ultimately, saved many lives.

A number of Debre Tsige residents immigrated to Canada following the drought and a period of civil unrest.

Online fundraising for the renovations runs through the end of February. The goal is to start the work by summer.

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Rice case. Mom says son shot before he could obey

The mother of a 12-year-old Ohio boy fatally shot by police who believed he was carrying a gun said Monday he was never given a chance to follow officers' orders.

Samaria Rice said in an interview at The Associated Press offices in New York that her son, Tamir Rice, was shot before he could respond to orders after the police pulled up next to him on a Cleveland playground and a rookie officer fired within two seconds. Tamir had an airsoft gun, which shoots nonlethal plastic pellets.

Rice said she wants the officer charged with murder and called on authorities to make sure young officers don't "ignore the training."

Police say officers were responding to a call Nov. 22 about someone possibly carrying a gun. They say Tamir didn't respond to commands to raise his hands before officer Timothy Loehmann fired his weapon. They also meant to stop the patrol car farther from Tamir, but the vehicle slid on the grass, the Cleveland police union has said.

Samaria Rice. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rice said she found out later that Tamir was handed the fake weapon by a girl at the playground. She said police also put Tamir's 14-year-old sister in handcuffs as she rushed to help her mortally wounded brother that day. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Philadelphia area. Suspect in killing of six eludes law

A man killed six people and seriously wounded another in three different homes outside Philadelphia and remained at large hours after the shootings, authorities said Monday.

Montgomery County District Attorney Risa Vetri Ferman identified the suspect in the shootings in Philadelphia's northwest suburbs as 35-year-old Bradley William Stone. She said all of the victims had a "familial relationship" to Stone.

On Monday afternoon, police converged on a home in Pennsburg, about 48 kilometres northwest of Philadelphia, and used a megaphone to try to compel an end to their daylong pursuit.

"Bradley, this is the police department!" an officer yelled. "Come to the front door with your hands up. You're under arrest."

Ferman said Stone was likely wearing military fatigues and was known to use a cane or walker to assist him.

The shootings occurred at homes in Harleysville, Lansdale and Souderton, three towns that are within a few miles of each other.

One neighbour, Evon Weron, said the suspect is a former member of the military and that the first victim was his ex-wife. Weron told the Lansdale Reporter the couple had been fighting over custody of children. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police probe hostage deaths in Sydney siege

Lindt Chocolat Café.
Three dead, including Iranian-born gunman

A hostage runs to armed tactical-response police officers for safety after she escaped from a café under siege at Martin Place in the central business district of Sydney, Australia, on Monday. ROB GRIFFITH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The deadly siege began in the most incongruous of ways, on a sunny Monday morning inside a cheerful cafe in the heart of Australia's largest city. An Iranian-born gunman burst in, took 17 people hostage, and forced some to hold a flag with an Islamic declaration of faith above the shop window's festive inscription of "Merry Christmas."

It ended after midnight with a barrage of gunfire that left two hostages and the gunman dead, four others wounded, and a nation that has long prided itself on its peace rocked to its core.

After waiting 16 hours, police stormed the Lindt Chocolat Café early Tuesday when they heard gunfire inside, said New South Wales state police Commissioner Andrew Scipione.

A loud bang rang out, several hostages ran from the building and police swooped in amid heavy gunfire, shouts and flashes. A police bomb disposal robot also was sent into the building, but no explosives were found.

"They made the call because they believed that at that time, if they didn't enter, there would have been many more lives lost," Scipione said.

The gunman was identified as 50-year-old Man Haron Monis, who once was prosecuted for sending offensive letters to families of Australian troops killed in Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott said Monis had "a long history of violent crime, infatuation with extremism and mental instability."

Scipione wouldn't say whether the two hostages who were killed — a 34-year-old man and a 38-year-old woman — were caught in crossfire, or shot by their captor.

One of the victims was Sydney lawyer and mother-of-three Katrina Dawson.

The other victim was identified in Australian media as the manager of the café, Tori Johnson.

Deputy Police Commissioner Catherine Burn said three women were treated in hospital for gunshot wounds and were in stable condition. A police officer was treated for shotgun pellet wounds and discharged, she said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Man Haron Monis

The gunman was known to authorities.

- Last year, he was convicted and sentenced to 300 hours of community service for using the postal service to send offensive letters to families of soldiers killed in Afghanistan.
- Monis was charged with being an accessory to the murder of his ex-wife. Earlier this year, he was charged with the sexual assault of a woman in 2002. He has been out on bail on the charges.

Man Haron Monis in April 2011 after a pretrial hearing in Sydney. DEAN LEWINS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

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Halal status of beef faked: U.S.

Indictment. Iowa company allegedly misled customers about slaughter methods

A food supplier for several years falsely marketed beef to Muslims around the world as meeting strict halal standards, exporting products that weren't slaughtered in accordance with Islamic law, U.S. federal prosecutors allege in a major fraud indictment.

Midamar Corp., based in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, sold at least $4.9 million US in beef to customers in Malaysia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and elsewhere that did not follow the halal practices promised in its labelling and advertising, according to the indictment returned on Dec. 5 by a grand jury.

Midamar and its directors, brothers Jalel and William (Yahya) Aossey, are charged with conspiring to make and use false statements and documents, sell misbranded meat and commit mail and wire fraud.

Also indicted is another company that the brothers controlled, Islamic Services of America, which is one of the few organizations that is approved by Malaysia, Indonesia, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and UAE to certify beef for import into their countries.

Midamar's founder, 73-year-old William Aossey Jr., pleaded not guilty to similar charges last week. His sons, ages 40 and 44, were scheduled to be arraigned Monday in federal court in Cedar Rapids.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bill Aossey Jr. poses for a portrait in front of an image of Damascus at Midamar Corp. in September 2010. MARY WILLIE/THE DES MOINES REGISTER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Fad. S. Korea goes nuts for macadamias

South Korean retailers are experiencing a boom in sales of macadamias after nut rage imploded the career of a Korean Air Lines executive and embarrassed her family and country.

The flavourful macadamia nut was unfamiliar to many South Koreans until Cho Hyun-ah, the daughter of Korean Air's chairman, ordered a flight attendant off a Dec. 5 flight from New York City after she was served them in a bag instead of on a plate.

Macadamias are now a household name in South Korea, and with curiosity about their taste piqued, sales are booming.

Auction, a South Korean unit of eBay and the country's second-largest e-commerce website, said Monday that sales of macadamias surged nearly 12-fold during the previous five days. It said macadamias previously made up five per cent of its nut sales but were now accounting for almost half.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Australia

Uber backtracks after price hikes

The ride-sharing company Uber was promising free rides and refunds Monday for people fleeing central Sydney after coming under fire for hiking prices during a hostage crisis that was unfolding there.

Mashable reported that Uber was briefly charging customers a minimum fare of $82 US and four times the usual per-mile rate to leave the city centre. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Impacting work

Banker banned for dodging rail fares

A London banker has been banned from working in the financial services industry after he was caught dodging rail fares. A Southeastern spokeswoman said the company believed Burrows was dodging fares for up to five years.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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TSX 13,705.14 (-25.91)

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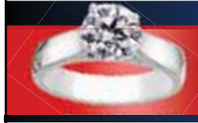

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VOICES

THE NEW FACE OF FEMINISM

Metro's Kristen Thompson looks at high-profile young feminists, such as recent Nobel Prize-winner Malala Yousafzai, who are taking a cause traditionally championed by adults and inspiring those in their cohort to effect change

KRISTEN THOMPSON
kristen.thompson@metronews.ca

There's a new face to feminism these days. It's a youthful face, made up of girls fighting for women's rights before they've become women themselves.

Consider Malala Yousafzai, who has just become the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. She was only 11 years old when she became a vocal activist for the universal right to education.

Her rallying cry for children's and girls' equality is aimed at policy-makers. But, by virtue of her age, she's inspiring fellow children.

It was girls who clutched photos of Malala at a school assembly in Pakistan to celebrate her Nobel Prize. Her autobiography is available in a young reader's edition to make her story more accessible to a younger audience.

Everywhere you look these days, girls' rights campaigns are aimed at, well, girls. There's Plan Canada's Because I Am A Girl movement. There's thefbomb.org, which connects teens concerned with gender equality. There's TeenFeministBlog, run by high-schooler Jules Spector, a teen advisor for the UN's Girl Up campaign.

And there are high-profile feminists such as Demi Lovato, Lorde and Emma Watson, the latter of whom recently gave an eloquent and rousing speech to the UN on the topic of gender equality.

Megan Boler, a professor of media and education at OISE-University of Toronto, notes there has been a profound shift in the perception and popularity of gender issues and that young people are, in large part, a driving force.

She attributes this shift to several factors, including Hillary Clinton's 2008 presidential run, which ignited discussions about women in politics; young women's involvement in the Occupy movement; the Slut Walk protests; and increased discussions about cyberbullying in light of the suicides of several teen girls who were bullied by classmates.

"There's something about feminism that's being rekindled and reclaimed," says Boler. "Generational divides will not discourage young women from getting involved. I'm seeing it with my own nieces. They bring up issues about sexism in the media and gender roles."

"If we see role models of all different ages, then the hopeful implication is that 'feminist' stops becoming this bad word and … that it's cool at all ages to engage in working for gender equality."

This is the feminism girls are growing up with: A confident and empowering movement where people such as Malala are telling girls they have a voice and that even children can ignite change.

This new era is teaching our girls they don't need to look solely to adults to fight for them; they are empowered to fight for their own rights to education, safety and sexual freedom.

Whether these girls grow up to be the next Gloria Steinem or Germaine Greer remains to be seen. But whether they create change through politics and activism or simply through the way they treat each other, they will have made a difference.

This didn't start with Malala. But she's been a huge catalyst. The impact of that brave, inspiring girl will have a ripple effect that will be felt by girls as they grow into women. This is Malala's legacy.

Fourth-wave feminism

This is the feminism girls are growing up with: A confident and empowering movement where people such as Malala are telling girls they have a voice and that even children can ignite change.

Clockwise, from top: Despite being shot by the Taliban for expressing her views, Malala Yousafzai is championing the rights of girls to go to school; Singer Lorde is confident and outspoken and openly identifies as a feminist; Demi Lovato is an advocate for women's health and anti-bullying campaigns and is open about her struggles with negative body image; Emma Watson is the UN Women Goodwill Ambassador. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Girls learning that feminism is unfinished business: Prof

Metro talked to Dr. Joan Simalchik, a professor in gender studies at the University of Toronto, about how feminist role models are getting younger.

Is there a new trend of young feminists championing for girls' rights? Yes. Many in this generation of young people ... begin with an understanding that the goals of feminism are pretty well reached, but when they venture out, they see that full equality is far from their reality.

Violence is still very present. Pay equity has not been achieved, and child-care is often not available or affordable. Women still are responsible for much domestic labour and family caregiving. When they see popular figures such as Emma Watson speak out, their own feelings are validated. And when they learn about Malala Yousafzai's bravery, they are inspired to exercise whatever agency they can muster.

What are the implications of this trend? When their expectations clash with reality, they look to make change. You can see this in the public initiatives young women have organized. The York University students who founded Slut Walk are a good example. Because violence is so prevalent, this campaign has resonated widely.

Why is this important? Because there is unfinished business along with contemporary issues like cyberbullying. The National Film Board has a new film with that name: The Unfinished Business of Feminism in Canada.

Is feminism changing from one generation to the next? Each generation responds in their own culturally available way to their own particular context. This generation for instance uses social media in ways that far outpace previous networking options. Beyond the form, the content of their feminism is far more diverse.

They see the intersection between race, class and gender clearer. They have responded to the Idle No More message and have taken up the demands for an end to violence against indigenous women. Feminism has changed — from time to time and from place to place. While my students love to learn about Nellie McClung's Mock Parliaments staged to gain voting rights for women, none of them, myself included, would identify as suffragettes. KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO

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Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Lindsay Lohan ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

Lindsay Lohan vows to never return to Hollywood

She's thought long and hard about it, and Lindsay Lohan is through with Hollywood.

"I won't live in L.A. again, hell no," she tells the Observer in a lengthy interview.

"My friends tell me s— when they come over I don't want to hear. I don't even know who got married and who got pregnant. You turn on the news in L.A. and it is all gossip about people. All the stuff that is going on in the world right now and this gossip is the news? I love the BBC. I haven't heard myself mentioned on TV since I have been here. That has been really weird for me, and great."

So there you go. The secret to keeping Lindsay Lohan away is to constantly mention her.

I'd like to take this time to announce that Ms. Lohan will feature into every single thing I write from now on.

Ahem. Also of note? Lohan seems to suggest her past issues with excessive partying that got her into so much trouble weren't really her own fault, but more the fault of her friends and their lack of creativity when it came to social activities. Well, them and the paparazzi.

"In L.A. I didn't know what to do apart from go out every night. That's when my friends were free. And I would go out and there would be all these cameras there and that's when it became difficult," she explains. "I can go for a run here on my own. I do every morning, early, and I think how my friends in New York would still be up partying at that time. I needed to grow up, and London is a better place for me to do that than anywhere else." Congratulations, London. She's all yours.

Forget the ice bucket: Samuel L. Jackson wants celebs to sing

Samuel L. Jackson

Pulp Fiction star and Marvel mainstay Samuel L. Jackson has a new challenge for celebrities who helped make the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge so successful this summer. He wants them to use that social media power to raise awareness about the protests happening around the U.S. following a New York grand jury's decision not to indict a police officer in the choking death of Eric Garner. "All you celebrities out there who poured ice water on your head, here's a chance to do something else," Jackson says in a video posted to Facebook. "I challenge all of you to sing the We Ain't Gonna Stop Till People are Free song."

At just 25, Taylor gets her own retrospective

Los Angeles' Grammy Museum unveiled a brand new exhibit this weekend called The Taylor Swift Experience, full of guitars, clothing, news clippings, old journals and general detritus culled from the 25-year-old's brief, but hugely successful, music career. While it may seem odd to have a retrospective museum exhibit for someone just barely born in the '80s, keep in mind that most of the instruments and costumes on display are from the recently abandoned country music part of career, so she wasn't using them anymore anyway. Also in the exhibit? One of her Grammys, as Swift has already won so many that she could spare one for the exhibit. Assuming, that is, she even notices it's gone.

Taylor Swift

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The next wave of soul, grunge and pop stars

This time last year, Sam Smith — now a six-time Grammy nominee — was just beginning to gain attention, and Banks' acclaimed debut album Goddess was still more than a half-year away. What artists are next in line for a breakout year come 2015?

scene@metronews.ca

Black Honey

Not much is known about the Brighton band Black Honey, whose music so far consists of a handful of demos. Those demos, though, are promising — powerful female vocals over lush, surf-rock instrumentals.
Listen to: Sleep Forever

Låpsley

Success is coming quickly for teenage soul-folk singer-songwriter-producer Holly Fletcher, a.k.a. Låpsley. Shortly after debuting on the scene, the Liverpool native signed to XL Recordings, home of Adele and The xx, and she's got a debut EP, Understudy, due Jan. 5.
Listen to: Falling Short

Josef Salvat

You likely know this Australian-born, London-based singer from his stripped-down take on Rihanna's Diamonds. He released the EP In Your Prime in 2014 and he has a debut album of his soulful electro-pop on the way.
Listen to: Open Season

Vérité

New York's Vérité came onto the scene in July with her pure, punchy alternative pop. She released a debut EP, Echo, in October, and we look forward to what 2015 will bring.
Listen to: Strange Enough

Wolf Alice

Another hotly tipped band that's already achieved some fame through live shows, especially in their native U.K. The grunge rock band from London debuted in 2013 with the single Fluffy and just put out an EP, Creature Songs, in May.
Listen to: Moaning Lisa Smile

Others to watch

- **Ryn Weaver.** New York/L.A.-based Ryn Weaver released her first pop single in June to viral success. Listen to: OctaHate.
- **James Bay.** The British singer-songwriter has had a noteworthy 2014 in the U.K., and earned the promising Brits Critics' Choice award. Listen to: Hold Back the River.
- **Shura.** London singer Aleksandra Denton, a.k.a. Shura, has won over many critics with her cutting-edge synth-pop evoking '80s and '90s greats such as Madonna. Listen to: Touch AFP

Grammys to honour Stevie with special 2-hour tribute

Music. Celebration for Motown legend will be recorded Feb. 10 in Los Angeles and aired on CBS on Feb. 16

The Grammys will pay tribute to Stevie Wonder with a special performance after the annual award night.

Organizers announced a two-hour show in the Motown legend's honour to be recorded on Feb. 10 at the Nokia Theatre in Los Angeles, two days after the awards.

Jack Sussman, an executive at CBS, which will broadcast the tribute on Feb. 16, said the show will "give everyone he's inspired a chance to show our esteem."

"His music is as poignant as it is appealing and his songs have the ability to illustrate our world in every note," he said.

The show follows the model of a special last February to celebrate 50 years since the Beatles arrived in the United States. The event produced a Beatles reunion of sorts with the Fab Four's two living members, Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr, joined by John Lennon's widow Yoko Ono and their son Sean Lennon. AFP

Grammy success

- Stevie Wonder, the 64-year-old visually impaired artist, has won 25 Grammys, including the prestigious Album of the Year in 1974, 1975 and 1977.
- The 1977 Grammy was for his seminal double album Songs in the Key of Life, which featured such huge hits as Isn't She Lovely and I Wish.
- Wonder embarked on a short tour last month in which he is playing his music from the double album.

Stevie Wonder AFP

Bruce Alger Marie Kozlowski Angela Lock

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Corgan in epic mode on Pumpkins' new album

Music. Band's eclectic frontman extends his musical style on Monuments to an Elegy

Billy Corgan could easily be cashing cheques by replaying 1990s hits of the Smashing Pumpkins, whose brooding rock spoke to a subset of youth in the know.

But even at the height of his fame, Corgan was thinking bigger. Now 47, Corgan has grown into an indie rock renaissance man, pursuing interests as diverse as Eastern spirituality and professional wrestling, while refusing to resign himself to being a musical nostalgia act.

On the Smashing Pumpkins' new album, Monuments to an Elegy, Corgan — the band's frontman, songwriter and sole consistent member — is once again in epic mode.

He has described Monuments, which came out last week, as the latest installment of Teargarden by Kaleidyscope — a larger, ongoing concept album of songs inspired by a deck of Tarot cards. Another record is slated for 2015.

Despite clocking in at little more than half an hour, Monuments sprawls widely in style, consistent with Corgan's passion for juxtaposing electronic and guitar elements as witnessed on the chart-topping 1995 double album, Mellon Collie and Infinite Sadness.

Monuments starts with echoes of the 1990s Pumpkins. The first track, Tiberius, opens with a gentle keyboard before being overpowered by a guitar that could have come from the band's hard-charging first two albums, Gish and Siamese Dream.

Being Beige, the album's first single, similarly works its way from a mournful acoustic guitar to a harder sound as Corgan — no stranger to romantic woe — sings in his distinctively plaintive voice, "I don't love you, for what it's worth / So if you're leaving, can you hurt?"

Later, on tracks Run2me and Dorian, the album takes a detour into dark electronica that brings to mind New Order or even at times Robyn.

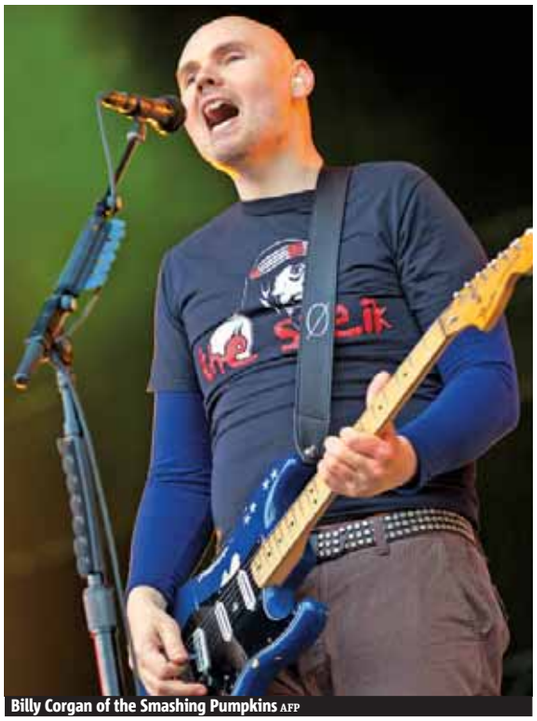
Corgan hinted that the followup album to be released next year, Day for Night, would have a heavier sound. He said recording the album was going slowly but that he decided, "We need more guitars and less everything else."

On a small tour to promote Monuments, the band has made a concession by playing some of their most recognizable hits including Disarm, Corgan's account of his difficult childhood.

But Corgan has also devoted energies to much more experimental endeavours.

Earlier this year, he created an eight-hour ambient interpretation of Siddhartha, Herman Hesse's 1922 novel inspired by the Buddha. He performed the work for free at the vegan teahouse he founded in the suburbs of his native Chicago.

And a Chicago-area theatre premiered Corgan's short musical Pretty Persephone about the Eleusinian Mysteries, the secretive sacred rites of ancient Greece. **AFP**



Billy Corgan of the Smashing Pumpkins AFP

Monuments to an Elegy

The Smashing Pumpkins' wide-ranging album swings by the end to a classic hard rock sound, showcasing the surprise choice of drummer: Tommy Lee of Motley Crue. Asked what it was like to work with the notoriously rowdy heavy metal star and ex-husband of Pamela Anderson, Corgan told a fan Q&A that Lee was a "great drummer" and that there was "nothing like sitting around the pool and hearing about things that you can't believe even happened, or were physically possible with another human."

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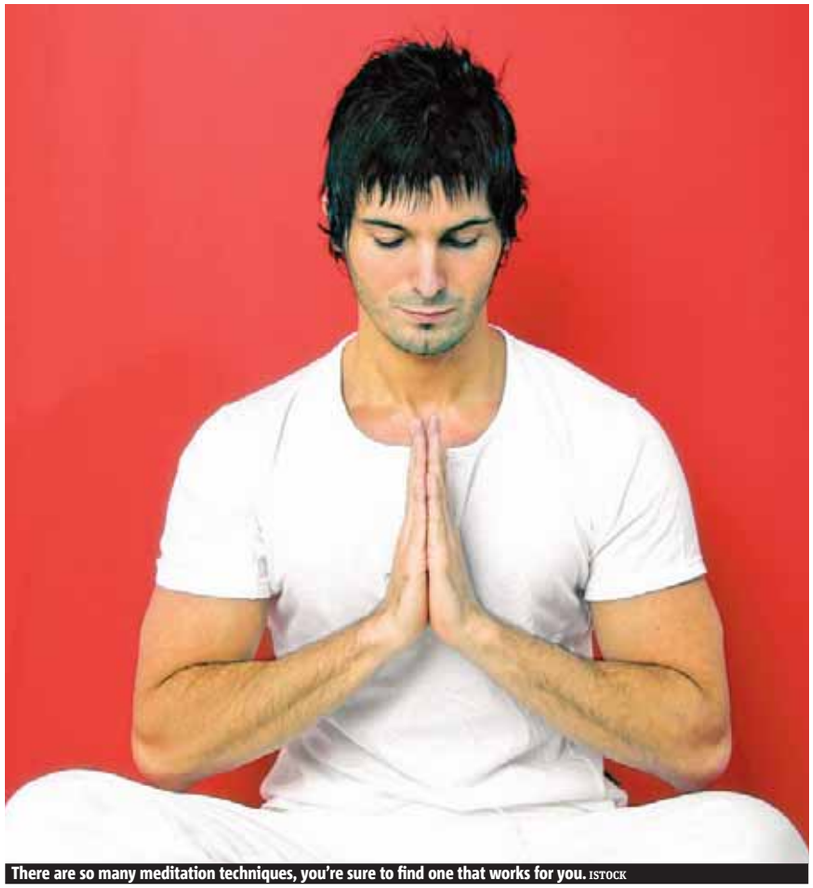
Twelve days of meditation

De-stress. OK, there's technically only nine days left until Christmas, but while you're decking the halls (and braving the mall) find inner calm

GABBY BERNSTEIN
Metro in New York City



There are so many meditation techniques, you're sure to find one that works for you. ISTOCK

When people tell me they don't have time to meditate, I reply, "Do you have time to feel like crap?"

We're all busy, especially in December, but with these seven steps we can all make time to meditate.

We all have a minute to spare

One minute of every day spent in stillness can change your life. Commit to taking even just one minute a day, using it to silence your mind and calm your energy, and follow this breathing technique: Breathe in for five seconds, hold your breath for five seconds, release for five seconds, hold for five seconds

Peace is in your pulse

Meditation can be as simple as finding your pulse. This one is easy for meditation newbies. A great meditation for beginners is what I've nicknamed Peace Is in Your Pulse. It improves your concentration and brings calm to even the most scattered mind.

Begin by sitting comfortably cross-legged on the floor. Lightly close your eyes and focus on the space between your eyebrows (the third-eye point). The mantra is "sat nam" (which means "truth identified").

The hand position (mudra) is simple. Place the four fingers of your right hand on your left wrist over your pulse. The fingers are in a straight line, lightly pressed on the wrist so you can feel your pulse in each fingertip. On each beat of your pulse, mentally hear the sound of sat nam.

This meditation can be done any time, anywhere, and you can experience great benefits in just one minute. Practise it daily to develop your intuition and calm your mind.

Peace begins with you

This technique is a fantastic Kundalini meditation that's fast, easy and effective.

Gently press your thumb against your other four fingers individually, and say one word: index finger (peace), middle finger (begins), ring finger (with), pinkie finger (me).

Breathe deeply as you say each word. Go as slow or as fast as you'd like. Use this technique in line at the bank, under the desk in an office meeting or in the middle of a fight with your partner. This technique will get you through all kinds of crazy emotions and help you release resentment fast.

Meditate while you cook

If you enjoy cooking, then it can be considered a meditative practice. Time spent in the kitchen is designated for creativity and helps you detach from your day. Next time you feel stressed out after a long day, cook a meal. Use your time in the kitchen to redirect your focus from your to-do list and onto serving your soul. Enjoy the process, and then enjoy the meal!

Walking meditation

You can find a meditative moment even when you're walking. The next time you're running an errand or walking to your office, make it meditative.

- Take a deep breath with every step.
- Feel your feet and focus on being more grounded with each step.
- Use a mantra while you walk. With each step, recite these words: "I am calm now."

A great place to try walking meditation is when you're in a crowded mall frantically finishing your holiday shopping.

Take a five-minute tech break

One of the main reasons we're so stressed is because of technology we are always carrying with us. Give yourself a five-minute tech break once a day.

Use that five minutes to practise one of the meditations you've learned here. Use your one-minute breath, go for a walking meditation or find peace in your pulse. Turn off your phone, step away from the computer and create space for stillness.

Use these steps to bring more meditative moments into your day and get your zen on well into the New Year!

GABBY BERNSTEIN IS A CERTIFIED KUNDALINI YOGA AND MEDITATION TEACHER. SHE IS ALSO TRAINED IN THE EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUE AND IS A STUDENT OF TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION.

Sifting through facts and fables of active sitting

Staying fit. Exercising while being seated will not replace a workout

As studies emerge classifying sitting for extended periods as bad to our health, wobbly stools and exercise balls are replacing office chairs, pedal sets are being installed under desks and everyone's talking about how to stay active while seated at their desk. But what can we expect from active sitting? Philippe Til, a trainer and martial arts expert in L.A., weighs in on the facts and fables.

Fact: Effective posture is the basis for active sitting. If we start off slumped, we might not get anything out of it.
"Doing exercises in a chair or on an exercise ball without taking posture into account is like stacking fitness on top of dysfunction," says Til. To get started, take what he calls the "horse ready" position. "Sit on the edge of your chair with your spine straight and your shoulders squared," he says, "And open up your thigh-to-trunk angle so that it's obtuse — this part is very important. Your feet will be directly under your shoulders."

Fable: Active sitting is a good way to get in shape.
Hardly, according to Til, who says that it should never be considered a substitute for whole fitness. "Active sitting is still sitting," he says. "It's not going to help you lose weight and it certainly won't increase your cardiorespiratory fitness levels. It will, however, get your blood flowing and can hinder some adverse long-term effects on the joints if done properly, starting with proper posture."

Fact: Good posture helps blood flow and oxygen intake.
The simple postural adjustment that Til suggests can open the airways in your lungs. "I've had clients with frequently occurring headaches who have seen them stop once they changed their posture, which is most likely due to the increased oxygen intake and blood flow."

Fable: Active sitting will make joint pain go away.
According to Til, desk jockeys are prone to pains in certain joints. Active sitting might reduce the pain a bit, he says, but it won't replace actual exercise.

Fact: Extended sitting is more likely the cause of joint pain than exercise.
Indeed, says Til, when his clients complain of pain in, for example, the lower back, sitting is the culprit in most cases. The pain is the back's way of responding either to lack of use or poor posture, or a little of both. He advises keeping the thigh-to-trunk angle open during the day to avoid the tightening of the hips experienced by most desk jockeys. Keeping up your regular exercise program, however, is essential if one is to benefit from active sitting. "Your joint pain will likely go away," he says, "and if it doesn't, it's best to see your doctor."

Getting started
Til suggests using a variety of tools, including exercise bands, that can add variety to your moves and perhaps even some calorie burn. If it's not possible to take equipment to work, start by using your desk, subtly placing your hands on the top and pushing down — and the opposite — to get in isometric moves. In the traditional seated position, push your heels powerfully into the ground. Shoulder rotations are important for keeping them square, says Til, and neck rotations engage spine muscles. AFP/ PHILIPPE TIL, WHO SUPPLIES THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF FRENCH FITNESS EXPERT GEORGES HÉBERT'S UPCOMING PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION. TO BE RELEASED IN JANUARY, IT IS THE SECOND EDITION OF THE NATURAL METHOD BOOK; THE FIRST IS AVAILABLE IN THE KINDLE STORE.

Extended seating may cause more joint pain than exercise. ISTOCK

Heart trumps brain in movie or book choices

EVA KIS
Metro in New York City

When you need a good cry, do you reach for the movie that's "based on a true story"?

Science says you're giving your brain far too much credit.

According to a new study published in the Journal of Consumer Research, it doesn't matter whether the story is inspired by actual events or is purely fictional once you've made an emotional investment.

The reverse — going for a novel over a memoir to avoid feeling sad — is also a false assumption, according to the authors from Brandeis and New York universities.

"Consumers may choose to read a tragic fictional story because they assume that knowing it was fictional would make them less sad than reading a less dramatic, but true, story," they write.

"However, the fictional nature does not alter the impact of the tragic story, leaving them more emotionally distraught than if they had read the true story instead."

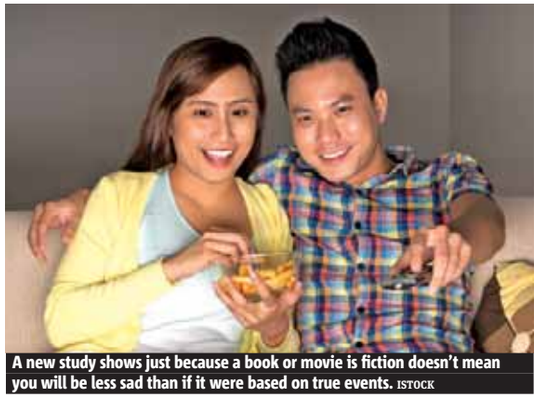
In the study, viewers were shown a movie they were told was fictional. Though this audience reported lower levels of sadness, they had been allowed to take breaks during the screening, which researchers theorize could have allowed them to remember that the story was not true.

In a different study, subjects claimed it would leave them sadder to know that a tragic story they'd just read had really happened rather than being made up.

Two other groups read the same story and were told either that it was an accounting of true events, or completely fiction. Both felt sad regardless of what they'd been told.

The only beneficiaries of this self-delusion, the researchers write, are publishers and movie studios willing to back a project simply because it's based on a true story.

"However, our results suggest that while emphasizing realism may increase sales, it does not necessarily increase satisfaction," the authors say.


A new study shows just because a book or movie is fiction doesn't mean you will be less sad than if it were based on true events. ISTOCK

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This recipe serves 24. THERESA ALBERT

Dip your way to being the trendiest hostess

Spinach Bread Spread.

These dippable suggestions will make holiday entertaining (or gifting) a lot easier

NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Holiday parties are a perfect time for dips and flatbreads. You can certainly buy all kinds of dips that will do the trick but they may contain more mayo and salt than anything else.

It really doesn't take much to mix a few items together to bump up the healthy factor, not to mention bragging rights that it is homemade!

Consider making large batches and using jars to deliver them as hostess gifts. Just be sure to let your host know that it isn't actually "canned" and must be refrigerated.

Or better yet, put it out for other guests now so you can shine in your own little spotlight when people "oooh" and "ahhh".

Try these combos, tweak ratios to get the texture, thickness and intensity that you would like.

FLASH FOOD

From your fridge to your table in 30 minutes or less

These are foolproof combos, you can't mess them up!

Apple chutney: Apple pie filling, curry powder, sesame oil

Tzatziki: Greek yogurt, grated cucumber (squeezed dry), garlic, salt

Blue cheese dip: Greek yogurt, blue cheese, grainy mustard, garlic powder

Artichoke and Asiago: In blender, pulse one can artichokes, grated Asiago, Greek yogurt, garlic, dill.

Warm chèvre and cranberry dip: Whole cranberries, orange juice, honey, cooked and cooled. Stir in goat cheese, serve warm.

Things to spread and dip have come a long way, too! Flatbreads are all the rage, both soft and crispy. Look for Ethiopian Teff bread called Injera. It's considered a kitschy throwback to include good old saltines and crackers with the higher end, cooler options. But if you try to pull that off on its own, be prepared for some foodie bullying.

Spinach Bread Dip

With the right chewy bread, this could be a whole meal! But do share at a party, it takes seconds to whip up, but fills you up and nourishes at the same time.

1. Drain spinach and squeeze dry. Blend all ingredients in a blender. Serve warm (heated in oven or microwave) or cold from fridge with chewy bread.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND TORONTO PERSONAL NUTRITIONIST. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

Ingredients

- 1 10-oz package frozen chopped spinach thawed
- 1 8-oz can artichokes
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup low-fat cream cheese
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 1 clove garlic, pressed
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- Salt and pepper

Domestic dispute

Enough evidence against Voynov for trial: Judge

Slava Voynov's wife told police the Los Angeles Kings defenceman hit, choked and pushed her into a television in their bedroom during a fight in October, an officer testified Monday.

After hearing the description of the injuries to Voynov's wife, a judge ruled Monday that there is enough evidence against the player for him to stand trial on a felony domestic-violence charge.

Voynov has pleaded not guilty to one felony count of corporal injury to a spouse with great bodily injury and will be re-arraigned on the charge on Dec. 29. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Las Vegas expansion

Tycoon careful not to push his luck

Bill Foley is trying to bring an NHL expansion team to Las Vegas and so far he's marching in step with commissioner Gary Bettman.

"I'm an ex-Army guy. I follow orders," Foley said in a phone interview over the weekend. "We've been very careful in our meetings with the NHL administrative staff, just trying to make sure that we do things in the proper fashion. We're not pushy; we're not demanding."

The league and its owners — and two-thirds would have to approve a bid — have many questions about a possible venture into the Las Vegas market. Foley points to the city's growing business community.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Humphries unfazed by double-duty day

Bobsled. Calgary native makes her World Cup debut in four-man event as part of a busy Saturday

Kaillie Humphries is preparing for a historic and hectic day in her bobsled career.

Because of a quirk in the schedule, the Canadian pilot will race her signature two-woman event and about an hour later make her World Cup debut as a four-man pilot Saturday.

Humphries and Elana Meyers Taylor of the U.S. will be the first females to pilot four-man bobsleds in a World Cup. Both will do double-driving duty in the men's and women's races at Canada Olympic Park.

"When it rains, it pours; you know the old saying," Humphries said Monday in COP's Ice House. "It's going to be a very intense day.

"I haven't ever had to be in this situation before. I'm not able to draw from experience. No one has been in this situation — coaching staff, nobody. It's going to be trial and error. We're going to face it the best way we know how."

Humphries has logged four runs at Olympic Games and world championships, but they're spread over two days. On Saturday, the second heat of the women's race starts at 12:30, followed by the first heat of four-man at 2 p.m. local time.

So Humphries, the two-time Olympic gold medallist, and Meyers Taylor will have little time to mentally switch gears between the women's and men's races.

"I've never had to do four all-out runs in one day, let alone with limited time in between," Humphries said. "It's new for everybody, not just for Elana and I, but for the rest of the world to be in this position.

"It's not set up perfectly, but nothing ever is. You learn to adapt and overcome, and this is going to be one of those situations." THE CANADIAN PRESS

New dynamics

Humphries asked the world's governing body of the sport in May to allow her to pilot a men's sled. With just six weeks until the start of the 2014-15 racing season, the FIBT gave her the green light by declaring four-man bobsled "gender neutral."

- That allows for mixed teams and all-female teams to compete against men's four-man sleds.

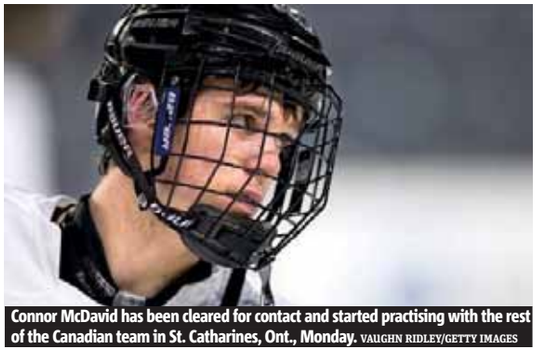
Quoted

"We call it the battle royale between her and I."

Kaillie Humphries on the competition-within-a-competition between her and Elana Meyers Taylor, who will also be competing in the four-man and two-woman bobsled events Saturday

Kaillie Humphries poses for photos on Monday at Canada Olympic Park. Humphries will make her World Cup debut as a four-man bobsled pilot on Saturday. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

McDavid gets green light to practise in full



Connor McDavid has been cleared for contact and started practising with the rest of the Canadian team in St. Catharines, Ont., Monday. VAUGHN RIDLEY/GETTY IMAGES

Connor McDavid shrugged off the latest sign of progress in his return from a broken bone in his right hand.

The junior hockey star has been cleared for contact and has started practising with the rest of his Canadian world junior teammates. That came as no surprise to McDavid, who expected to be at this point in his recovery all along.

"It's kind of been the plan for a while now," McDavid said. "The last checkup was a couple Tuesdays ago, and that's kind of been the plan from Day One, was to start contact on this date."

The plan has McDavid on track to be healthy and ready to go when Canada opens the tournament Dec. 26 against Slovakia in Montreal. But shedding the yellow no-contact jersey and getting through a full practice was an important step toward that goal.

"How did they feel? Do they look confident on the ice when they skate, do they have poise with the puck, do they seem to have chemistry out there?" head coach Benoit Groulx said. "When you look at Connor today, I thought he had all that, and it is good to see that." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Potential linemates

McDavid appeared to fit in seamlessly Monday skating between Nic Petan and Robby Fabbri on the second line. Sam Reinhart centred the veteran first line between Max Domi and Anthony Duclair.

4 SPORTS

Oilers sack Eakins

Mounting losses. Todd Nelson from AHL affiliate Oklahoma City to take over as interim

Oilers general manager Craig MacTavish sacked head coach Dallas Eakins on Monday, saying that, while Eakins is taking the fall for mounting losses, he isn't solely to blame for what's shaping up to be another dismal NHL season in playoff-starved Edmonton.

"There's blood all over my hands in this too as well because I put the lineup together and the roster," MacTavish told a news conference at the Oilers' downtown offices.

"But it's just the compounding of the losses that led me to this decision."

MacTavish will take over as head coach on a transitional basis before handing the reins to Todd Nelson, who is being promoted to interim head coach from Edmonton's American Hockey League affiliate in Oklahoma City.

MacTavish said he didn't have a timeline on when he would return to the front office.

Oilers' general manager Craig MacTavish
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nelson inherits a team that has lost 15 of its past 16 games and is last in the Western Conference with 19 points through 31 games.

The Oilers are on track to miss the playoffs for the ninth consecutive year, and Nelson will be the fifth head coach in seven years.

Disillusioned fans in recent weeks have begun voting with their feet. Gaps and rows of empty seats are commonplace at Rexall Place, and tickets can be had for fire-sale prices.

Criticism has been pointed directly at management, including hockey operations boss Kevin Lowe and owner Daryl Katz.

Considered one of the hottest coaching candidates when with the AHL's Toronto Marlies, Eakins was the star hire made by MacTavish when he took over as general manager less than two years ago.

MacTavish was so keen to lock up Eakins he fired the head coach at the time, Ralph Kruger, over Skype.

Eakins, with a four-year deal, was seen as an X and O's wunderkind, on the cutting edge of the new generation of coaches with novel ideas such as the swarm defence.

It didn't translate to the ice.

The Oilers finished with the third-fewest points in the NHL in 2013-14 with a record of 29-44-9 in the one full season under Eakins.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Magic not enough in T.O.

The Raptors' James Johnson goes to the hoop against Kyle O'Quinn of the Orlando Magic at the Air Canada Centre in Toronto on Monday. The Raptors won 95-82. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Nationals

Harper to sign for two years: Source

Outfielder Bryce Harper and the Washington Nationals came to terms on a $7.5-million US, two-year contract, avoiding a grievance hearing.

Harper will receive salaries of $2.5 million US in 2015 and $5 million US in 2016 from the reigning NL East champions, according to a person familiar with the agreement who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Monday because the deal had not been announced.

Harper, the 2012 NL Rookie of the Year, had been scheduled to have a $1-million US salary in 2015, along with the chance to earn up to $500,000 US in roster bonuses. But the Major League Baseball Players Association filed a grievance on his behalf over whether he could void the final season of the $9.9-million US, five-year contract he signed when he was drafted No. 1 overall in 2010.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Fifth Washington QB

Gruden returns to Griffin

Robert Griffin III is back as the starter for the Washington Redskins, the fifth starting quarterback change made by coach Jay Gruden this season.

Gruden said Monday that Griffin will get the call for Saturday's game against the Philadelphia Eagles.

Griffin has played in relief the last two weeks after Colt McCoy left both games with a neck injury.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Very humbling'

Manziel takes the 30-0 in

Along with being sacked, taunted, embarrassed and generally mistreated on Sunday by the Cincinnati Bengals, Johnny Manziel got humbled.

The Browns rookie quarterback said Monday that his first NFL start, a 30-0 loss that essentially eliminated Cleveland from the playoffs, was his toughest day on a football field.

"It's the first game I've ever not scored a point in and been shut out," Manziel said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

49ers. Elimination forces Harbaugh to talk future

Head coach Jim Harbaugh welcomes a sit-down with 49ers CEO Jed York and general manager Trent Baalke to discuss the future — his future — after a season that will end in two weeks without a playoff berth for the first time during his four-year tenure.

Harbaugh said Monday no meeting is scheduled and wouldn't say whether he should be the one to initiate it.

"I'm always available to talk to the owner and general manager, of course," Harbaugh said a day after the Niners were eliminated from playoff contention with a 17-7 loss at Seattle. "Everybody's been head-down, everybody's been focused on the season — players, coaches, front office. That's been our approach."

There's an uncomfortable vibe around team headquarters given the uncertain future of Harbaugh, who has one season remaining on the $25-million US, five-year contract he signed in January 2011. Especially with two remaining home games at Levi's Stadium, where the 49ers (7-7) have hardly established much of a home-field advantage.

Harbaugh acknowledged how much his unsettled position might be taking the focus off his players.

"I would rather talk about how proud I am of them. There's been a lot taken away from them and the way they've been playing," he said. "I hate to keep contributing to that."

Now, Harbaugh wants to end this disappointing year on a positive note. San Francisco hosts San Diego on Saturday night then finishes the season at home against NFC West-leading Arizona on Dec. 28. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fans jeer at the eliminated 49ers on Sunday in Seattle.
JOHN FROSCHAUER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
It may seem as if someone has taken advantage of your kindly nature but could it be you are overreacting? Even if they have been less than honest has it done any harm?

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
The next 24 hours will be hectic. If you find yourself rushing all over the place but not getting much done you should take that as a sign that you have lost control.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Don't bite off more than you can chew today, especially if you are trying to impress important people. The best way to influence them is to be yourself.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
This could be a lucky day for you, especially if you are prepared to overcome your own cautious nature and take a risk of some kind.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If you give the impression that you are anxious for success you could attract the attention of those who know how to play on your greed.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
A loved one will be a little too emotional today but if you want some peace you are going to have to help them deal with their issues.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You don't have to explain your motives or your actions to anyone. If someone demands to know what you are doing just tell them to mind their own business.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
The more others say something cannot be done the more determined you will be to prove them wrong. Just be careful you don't take on something that is beyond even your formidable powers.

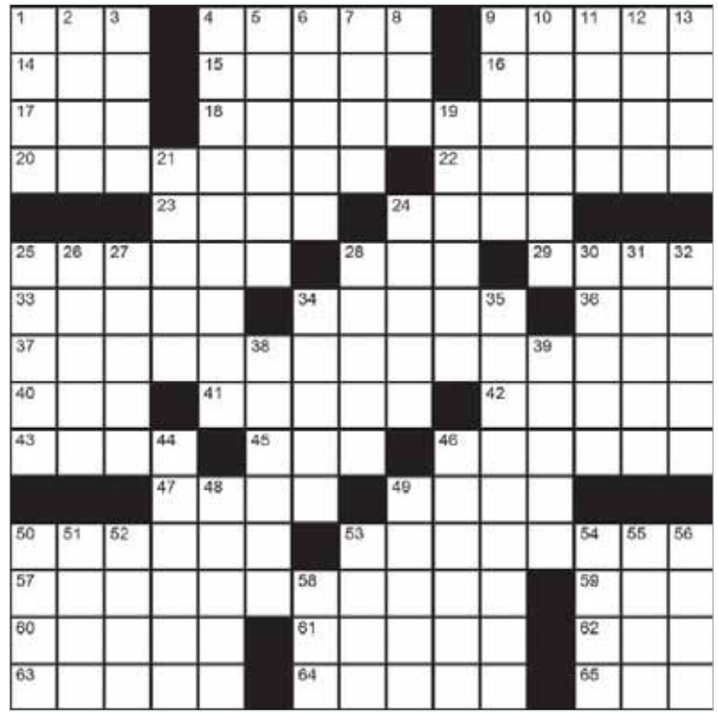
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If you let your emotions get the better of you today you will most likely regret it later in the week. However bad something may be, it isn't worth getting worked up.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Anyone who expects you to stay in one place today is going to be disappointed. You will rush, maybe with no idea of where you're going.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
The atmosphere will be a bit tense today. That could spell trouble if you are the type of person who relieves tension by spending money.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may have to react to a series of minor crises today. Most of them are of your own making.

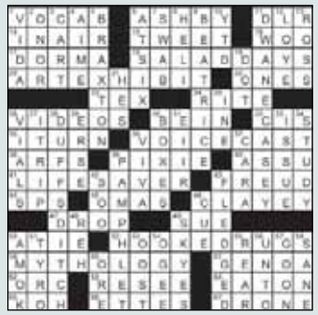
Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across
1. Classy car
4. Sofa-turned-bed
9. Story with morals
14. Ms. Remick
15. Way to serve a deli sandwich: 2 wds.
16. Be of service
17. Compass dir.
18. Stephen Harper in 2011 ...and again in 2015?: wd. + acr.
20. St. __ Basilica, in Charlottetown
22. Unorthodox belief
23. "Hey, there..."
24. Rock's covering
25. Bury
28. Sci-Fi play
29. Samson's biblical hideaway, Rock of __
33. Polynesian language
34. Old labour camp of Russia
36. Lettered sun ray
37. Everest enthusiast: 2 wds.
40. Early hrs.
41. "Have a Little Faith in Me" singer John
42. Room and __
43. __ and exercise
45. Alphabetic trio
46. Skating great Ms. Yamaguchi
47. Belinda Carlisle's "__ Weak"
49. Gotchas!
50. That landing craft on Comet 67P
53. Drink known for its 'chocolatey' malt flavour
57. Invitee's offering for the party planner: 2 wds.
59. Li'l diagram
60. Computer chip company
61. Athenian's shopping venue
62. "Alice" waitress
63. West†Yorkshire city in England
64. Currency of Kuwait
65. Thumbs-up

Down
1. Discharged some vein liquid
2. Bill of fare
3. Imagine, archaically
4. Slave River town in the Northwest Territories near the Alberta border: 2 wds.
5. Anxiety
6. University in Peterborough, ON
7. Belonging to Popeye's beloved Olive
8. Wedding announcement word
9. Fortunes
10. Disinclined
11. Beseeched
12. Go-Go's: "Our __ Are Sealed"
13. Like certain trees
19. Like music meant for an ensemble to sing
21. Reject
24. Swindle
25. Irate one's declaration: 2 wds.
26. The Beauty Myth author Ms. Wolf
27. Type of abode
28. "__ __ You" by Bryan Adams
30. Band instruments
31. Deflect
32. Tuesday: French
34. Huge
35. 'Rock of...' or 'Strait of...'
38. Musician Ms. Mann's
39. "Push" band from Vancouver
44. Leaning
46. The face of the Great Sphinx is believed to be in this Pharaoh's likeness, variantly
48. Certain Celts
49. Airplane: French
50. Drummer/singer Mr. Collins
51. Sharpen skills
52. Fancy suffix to 'Art'
53. Today, in Rome
54. Borderline
55. Cairo's river
56. Me-me-me's
58. Down

Yesterday's Crossword

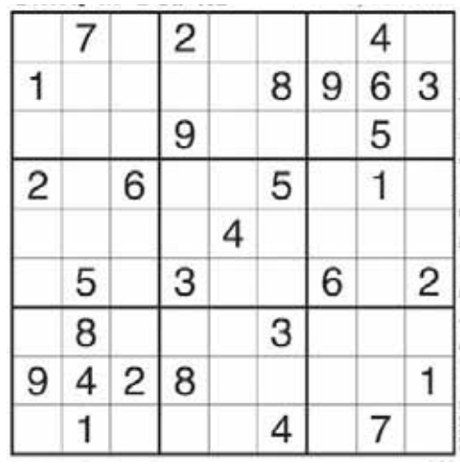


Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



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Yesterday's Sudoku

3	5	6	8	9	2	1	7	4
9	7	1	6	4	5	8	2	3
8	4	2	3	7	1	5	6	9
7	9	3	4	5	6	2	1	8
5	1	8	7	2	9	4	3	6
6	2	4	1	3	8	9	5	7
1	6	7	2	8	4	3	9	5
2	8	9	5	6	3	7	4	1
4	3	5	9	1	7	6	8	2

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Market Mall

North Hill Centre

Southeast

Chinook Centre

Deerfoot Meadows

Shepard Centre

Southcentre Mall

1288 42nd Ave. SE

4410 50th Ave. SE

4825 Macleod Trail S

6039 Centre St. S

6100 Macleod Trail S

7845 Flint Rd. SE

Southwest

Bankers Hall

Bow Valley Square

The Core

Shawnessy Shopping Centre

Westbrook Mall

Westhills Town Centre

321 6th Ave. SW

2008 33rd Ave. SW

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